

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
PLANNING AND DESIGN COMMITTEE
Mansfield Downtown Partnership Office
Town Hall – Conference Room B**

Tuesday, October 18, 2011

MINUTES

Members: Steve Bacon, Jon Hand, Manny Haidous, Chris Kueffner, Frank McNabb, Ruth Moynihan, Betsy Paterson, Karin Randolph, and Pene Williams

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm, Kathleen Paterson

Guests: Lon Hultgren, Mansfield Director of Public Works; Linda Painter, Mansfield Director of Planning and Development; Alexandria Roe, Partnership Board member; Kristin Schwab, Partnership Board member

1. Call to Order

Steve Bacon called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes from September 20, 2011

Betsy Paterson made a motion to approve the minutes from September 20, 2011. Frank McNabb seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

4. Discussion of Naming of Streets and Buildings in Storrs Center

Lon Hultgren, Mansfield's Director of Public Works, said he began to think about the naming of the public streets in Storrs Center. He had some preliminary conversations with Town staff and the Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission chair Rudy Favretti. Mr. Hultgren reviewed some of the ideas with the Committee including maintaining Village Street as the permanent name of the street; and naming the semi-circle road around the intermodal center as Cazel Circle to honor long-time resident and public citizen Fred Cazel. There has also been some discussion about the naming of the intermodal center.

The Committee discussed some of the suggestions and also thought it would be important to name the town square.

Mr. Hultgren said the matter would likely also be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission. It is his understanding that the final decision would be by the Town Council.

The Committee can make a recommendation to the Town Council. Mr. Bacon suggested that the Committee review the ideas and potentially take action on a recommendation to the Council at its November meeting. Ms. Paterson suggested that ideas be sent to Mr. Bacon.

5. Presentation on Mansfield Downtown Public Spaces Plan

Mr. Bacon introduced Kristin Schwab, a member of the Partnership Board of Directors, and Chair of the Advertising and Promotion Committee. Ms. Schwab is also a landscape architecture professor at UConn. Mr. Bacon said Ms. Schwab will present the results of a public spaces plan for the downtown that she has been working on with her students.

Ms. Schwab said that as chair of the Advertising and Promotion Committee she began to think about ways to promote the public spaces in the downtown. She has been working with her students for the past six months. The project was funded by the Partnership and UConn.

Ms. Schwab presented the work on the public spaces plan in a Power Point presentation.

Ms. Schwab said that key stakeholders were invited to meetings in June and September to provide input to the plan. She said mapping and initial recommendations were developed and she is now looking for final input. The plan will be both a communications and planning tool. The plan will look at prioritizing recommendations, funding options, and who manages the public spaces.

Ms. Schwab said that one of the key recommendations that came out of the June stakeholder meeting was the establishment of an urban trail similar to the Freedom Trail in Boston. In order not to miss a funding opportunity, the Town submitted a grant for the trail to the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection for funding through its federal recreational trails program.

Ms. Paterson suggested working with the UConn School of Fine Arts on signage design and public art. Alex Roe said that UConn has a public art committee that Dean Woods chairs. Ms. K. Paterson said the Partnership has discussed public art ideas in the past. Mr. Bacon also suggesting tapping into the Town's Arts Advisory Committee.

Ms. Schwab said another idea that has been proposed is to develop a perimeter walk around Storrs Center.

Ms. Schwab said one of the key areas for improvement is better connections re: access across the Community Center and High School property. She said there has been discussion about how to better focus walkers from the Mansfield Apartments to the main UConn campus. Manny Haidous mentioned that the path from the High School to Farrell Fields is not very accessible.

Ms. Schwab expanded on the idea of the urban trail, noting that the idea is to provide connections in three parts – University, Community and Green Infrastructure. The trail could be marked by medallions in the sidewalks, signage, public art, etc. There would be some interpretive elements. She said the grant request also included funding for footbridges in the open space area in Storrs Center.

Ms. Schwab said one of the strong recommendations that came out of the 2nd stakeholder meeting was a sidewalk/bike connection from Four Corners to Storrs Center.

Manny Haidous asked about “green” lighting. Ms. Schwab said that green elements are part of the plan. Mr. Haidous said he thought effective lighting would be important to draw people to the key nodes. Ms. Schwab said there may need to be additional lighting in the area from the Mansfield Apartments to UConn (through the High School).

The Committee commended and thanked Ms. Schwab for her work.

Mr. Bacon asked who at UConn is responsible for improvements along Bolton Road. Ms. Schwab said this would come under the UConn Beautification Committee and as a member, she has brought the idea up to the Committee on potential improvements. One of the suggestions is additional trees on Bolton Road and in the parking lots. Ms. Roe said this would need to be a future capital project to improve the Bolton Road area.

6. Topics for Next Meeting and Next Meeting Date (November 16, 2011)

Mr. Bacon said that BL Companies is planning to come back to the Committee at its November 16 meeting to update its work on the Storrs Center Sustainability Guidelines checklist .

7. Adjourn

Chris Kueffner made a motion to adjourn at 6:15 pm. Mr. Haidous seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Minutes prepared by Cynthia van Zelm